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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Matters
Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting
Seventeenth session
Geneva, 3-5 July 2000
Item 3 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. Promoting transparency and financial disclosure: Accounting by small and medium-sized enterprises

4. Other business

5. Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session

6. Adoption of the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on its seventeenth session

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II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1. Election of officers

1. In accordance with established practice, it is suggested that the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. Concerning the organization of the work of the session, the Group has three working days available. It is therefore suggested that the first plenary meeting on 3 July be devoted to procedural matters (items 1 and 2) and the introduction of item 3. Subsequent meetings will be devoted to a detailed discussion of item 3, followed by consideration of items 4 and 5. The last plenary meeting, on the afternoon on Wednesday, 5 July, would be devoted to item 6, adoption of the report.

3. The secretariat will prepare a tentative schedule indicating the issues to be dealt with by the meeting, which will be available on the first day.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.2/ISAR/8 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3. Promoting transparency and financial disclosure: Accounting by small and medium-sized businesses

4. At its sixteenth session, the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts decided to devote its seventeenth session to the issue of accounting by small and medium-sized enterprises (TD/B/COM.2/ISAR/7 Annex I). The Group realizes that, while its mandate is to promote harmonization of accounting rules, regulators are beginning to move towards a formal acceptance of differential reporting. The idea is that, where economic entities are of very different sizes, they should have different reporting frameworks. While uniformity provides comparability, when the underlying economic entities are substantially different in size, comparability fails to be meaningful. At the same time, the imposition on small businesses of detailed rules intended for regulating large entities places a heavy burden on a sector of the economy that is least well placed to absorb it. This also represents an obstacle to enterprise development. In most of the countries represented at UNCTAD, SMEs are by far the largest employers and should be given adequate guidance on financial reporting as a basis for sound management.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.2/ISAR/9 Accounting by small and medium-sized enterprises

Item 4. Other business

5. Under "other business", several topics can be raised, some of a substantive nature and others of a follow-up nature relating to the ongoing activities of the Intergovernmental Working Group. For instance, the Group may decide to review work in progress on environmental performance indicators and the implementation of the guideline on national requirements for the qualification of professional accountants. It may also wish an update on recent developments in international accounting from other international organizations.

Item 5. Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session

6. The provisional agenda for the eighteenth session will be discussed in the light of the deliberations of the seventeenth session, as well as previous sessions.

Item 6. Adoption of the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on its seventeenth session

7. The Intergovernmental Working Group may wish to adopt agreed conclusions, as it deems necessary. The final report will be compiled under the authority of the Rapporteur after the conclusion of the session. It will be submitted to the Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues.